

REMARKS**Claims Rejected under 35 USC 102(b)**

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 6 and 10-15 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Ihara et al. (US PGPUB 2002/0092168). The Examiner's position was stated that Ihara teaches all of the underlying limitations of the present invention contained within the aforementioned claims. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and seeks reconsideration from the Examiner.

The Applicants respectfully note that the Ihara publication teaches the pressing of a cup-formed product dissimilar to the present invention. Furthermore, the Ihara reference fails to teach allowing the return of the annular die (16) under a pressure load in the opposite direction of that of the pressing in the forming die (15) as claimed by the present invention. The present invention is adapted to address the problems associated with deformation of tubular blanks when subjected to inner diameter die procedures. The application of technology associated with the protection of robust cup-shaped products fails to teach the significant limitations of the present invention. This is especially evident from Ihara wherein the specification clearly indicates that "it is preferred that during the cup forming process the tapered peripheral wall face Wba is not constrained". (p.5, par. 59) Although the Applicants assert that Ihara fails to teach the limitations of the claims as filed, the Applicants have amended the claims for clarification purposes to more clearly define the field of the present invention. It is directed towards production of tubes or hollow profiles and provides unique and patentably distinct improvements over existing systems.

Claims rejected under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ihara in view of Budrean (US 4,785,648). The Examiner's position is that Ihara teaches the underlying limitations of the present invention with the exception of splined shaft profiles, that Budrean teaches splined shaft profiles, and that the combination is obvious. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and seeks reconsideration.

The Applicants respectfully call the Examiner's attention to the Budrean patent which is clearly directed toward a cup-formed product starting from circular stock. Neither Budrean nor Ihara teach the return under a pressure load as claimed by the present invention. The Applicants, therefore, assert that since neither the Ihana nor the Budrean references teach the limitations of the present invention either alone or in combinations, the Examiner should reconsider the rejection of these claims. Such reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Allowed Claims

Claim 7 was deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form. The underlying limitations of independent claim 1 as filed have been incorporated into dependent claims 7. The Applicants assert that Claim 7 is in proper form for allowance.

Conclusion

Having overcome all of the objections and rejections set forth in the Office Action, Applicants submit that claims 1 and 6-15 are in a condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance indicating the same is therefore earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to telephone the Applicants' undersigned attorney at (248) 433-7200 if any unresolved matters remain.

Respectfully submitted,

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